

CITY OF ALAMO HEIGHTS
CITY COUNCIL
September 22, 2008

A regular meeting of the City Council of the City of Alamo Heights, Texas was held at the Council Chambers, 6120 Broadway, at 5:30 p.m. on Monday, September 22, 2008.

Present and composing a quorum were:
Mayor Louis Cooper
Councilman Stan McCormick
Councilman Bobby Rosenthal
Mayor Pro-Tempore Councilwoman Jill Souter
Councilman Bill Kiel
Councilwoman Susan Harwell

Also attending were:
City Manager Rebecca Waldman
City Attorney Mike Brenan
Assistant to City Manager/Information Technology Manager Marian Ramirez
Finance Director Cynthia Barr
Human Resource Manager/Deputy City Secretary Judith E. Surratt
City Secretary Denise M. Silva
Community Development Director Ann McGlone
Public Works Director Shawn P. Eddy
Police Chief Rick Pruitt
Fire Chief Bill Hagendorf

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Mayor Louis Cooper called the meeting to order at 5:36 p.m.

Item #1 Mayor Louis Cooper read and presented a Proclamation to Barbara Wenger, Board of Adjustment Chairperson, recognizing her for 25 years of service to the city and community.

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Item #2 Mayor Cooper asked City Council for any corrections to the minutes of the August 25, 2008, City Council Meeting. A motion was made by Councilman Stan McCormick to approve the minutes of August 25, 2008 as amended. Motion was seconded by Councilman Bobby Rosenthal and passed by unanimous vote.

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Item #3 City Manager's Report
Councilwoman Jill Souter arrived and took her place at 5:49 p.m.

- City Manager Rebecca Waldman announced that, in addition to serving as Alamo Heights Public Works Director, she has asked Shawn Eddy to also assume the role

of Assistant City Manager. Mr. Eddy will continue to provide leadership for the Public Works Department as well as oversee the organization in Ms. Waldman's absence and will take the lead in implementing key city-wide projects.

- Ms. Waldman also announced the appointment of Patrick Sullivan to the position of Assistant Public Works Director. Mr. Sullivan will be responsible for the day to day operations of the parks, streets, solid waste and utility divisions of the Public Works Department.
- Ms. Waldman announced the resignation of Denise Silva from her position as City Secretary and presented her with a plaque in appreciation for her service.

Councilman Bill Kiel expressed his opinion that there is a need for someone to assume responsibility when the city manager is absent.

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Citizens to be heard concerning items not listed on the agenda

Margaret Houston, 140 Patterson, commented that she did not feel that the position of assistant city manager is needed for a city the size of Alamo Heights.

Pat Evans, 140 Patterson, voiced her opinion that the parking situation at 131 Patterson is not aesthetically pleasing.

Councilwoman Jill Souter complimented the efficiency of the Public Works Department. Councilwoman Souter shared her admiration of Denise Silva's hard work and dedication.

Councilwoman Susan Harwell also shared her sentiments on the departure of Denise Silva.

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Staff Reports

Item #4 Police Chief Rick Pruitt provided information and invited everyone to attend the 3rd Annual Animal Fair which will take place at the Alamo Heights Nature Trails, located at 246 Viesca, on Saturday, September 27th, beginning at 9:00 a.m. until 1:00 p.m.

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Item #5 Police Chief Pruitt recognized and presented Sharon Howard with a plaque for her valuable contributions and dedication as a volunteer to the City's Trap-Neuter-Return Program. Mayor Cooper read and presented Sharon with a Certificate of Appreciation on behalf of the city.

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Item #6 Public Works Director Shawn Eddy updated City Council on the Capital Improvement Program regarding E. Castano Avenue and N. New Braunfels Avenue. Mr. Eddy showed a PowerPoint presentation regarding proposed revisions to the design of the

reconstruction of E. Castano Avenue. Mr. Eddy stated that staff is proposing to remove the most southern lane and construct 2 westbound lanes and 1 eastbound lane with right-hand turn lanes at each intersection. Mr. Eddy stated that this change will accommodate the 35 foot right turn queue at the E. Castano and N. New Braunfels intersection recommended by the traffic study update. Mr. Eddy informed City Council that staff is communicating the E. Castano Avenue design changes with adjacent property owners and Alamo Heights ISD.

Mr. Eddy reported that the East Castano Avenue project is still scheduled to be completed in October. The overlay project on N. New Braunfels will be rescheduled to accommodate replacement of a water line between Burr Road and Barilla Place and Austin Highway and Arcadia Place.

Mr. Eddy and Project Manager Richard Kelly answered City Council members questions concerning traffic study patterns and the proposed plans to handle the drainage problem on Viesca.

Linda Mitchell, 250 Halcyon, expressed her concern with traffic flow on E. Castano Avenue and shared her observation that the queuing is much worse when school is let out not on the way to school. Ms. Mitchell suggested that the best solution would be 2 lanes down the hill and 1 lane up the hill and explained that this would give the added benefit of having 1 left turn only, 1 straight, and 1 right turn lane at the bottom of the hill.

Chief Pruitt explained that, in response to the neighborhood concerns of traffic on the streets surrounding the high school, patrol officers have been observing traffic flow both before and after school and that traffic counts and radar surveys have been conducted. The results show that there is a heavier volume of traffic in the morning going towards the high school and less during after-school hours.

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Items for Individual Consideration

Item #7 Mayor Cooper announced that agenda item #7 regarding a request for a demolition permit for 271 E. Oakview was rescheduled to the October 13, 2008 City Council Meeting at the request of the applicant.

Councilwoman Jill Souter inquired if the demolition permit request for 271 E. Oakview was submitted prior to or after the passage of the Community Development policy for unexpected conditions encountered during demolitions. Community Development Director Ann McGlone responded that she would find out and make sure the applicant receives a copy of that policy if the application falls under the new rules.

There was no City Council action taken.

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Item #8 Mayor Cooper read the caption to an ordinance.

AN ORDINANCE TERMINATING THE SUBLEASE TO ALAMO HEIGHTS – NORTHSIDE PONY LEAGUE FOR 2.520 ACRES OF LAND IN THE OLMOS BASIN AND APPROVING A NEW SUBLEASE AGREEMENT WITH ALAMO HEIGHTS LITTLE LEAGUE, INC.

COMBINING THE LAND AND FACILITIES FORMERLY
SUBLEASED TO ALAMO HEIGHTS - NORTHSIDE PONY LEAGUE
AND WITH THE LAND AND FACILITIES CURRENTLY SUBLEASED
TO ALAMO HEIGHTS LITTLE LEAGUE, INC.

Mr. Eddy informed City Council that the Alamo Heights Pony League (AHPL) and the Alamo Heights Little League (AHLL) have requested the termination of the City's sublease with the AHPL and consolidation of the property formerly subleased by the AHPL into a new sublease between the City and AHLL. The new lease will include the same terms included in both of the entities former leases and will ensure the continued availability of organized baseball and softball activities to the youth of the community. Mr. Eddy explained that the reason for the new subleases was to combine the various original documents and amendments, including exhibits, into a single document much easier to understand.

Councilman Bobby Rosenthal answered Councilwoman Susan Harwell's questions concerning the locations of the properties included in the lease.

After brief discussion, a motion was made by Councilman Bobby Rosenthal to approve the Ordinance terminating the sublease to Alamo Heights Pony League (AHPL) and approve a new sublease agreement with Alamo Heights Little League (AHLL). Motion was seconded by Councilman Stan McCormick and passed by unanimous vote.

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Item #9 Mayor Cooper read the captions to the following three ordinances.

AN ORDINANCE MAKING APPROPRIATIONS FOR THE SUPPORT OF THE CITY OF ALAMO HEIGHTS FOR THE FISCAL YEAR BEGINNING OCTOBER 1, 2008 AND ENDING SEPTEMBER 30, 2009; AND ADOPTING THE ANNUAL BUDGET OF THE CITY OF ALAMO HEIGHTS FOR THE FISCAL YEAR BEGINNING OCTOBER 1, 2008 AND ENDING SEPTEMBER 30, 2009.

AN ORDINANCE LEVYING AN AD VALOREM TAX AT THE RATE OF \$0.355662 FOR EVERY \$100.00 VALUATION FOR THE SUPPORT OF THE CITY GOVERNMENT OF THE CITY OF ALAMO HEIGHTS, TEXAS, SAID TAXES BEING LEVIED FOR THE TAX YEAR BEGINNING JANUARY 1, 2008 AND ENDING DECEMBER 31, 2008.

AN ORDINANCE RATIFYING THE PROPERTY TAX INCREASE REFLECTED IN THE 2009 FISCAL YEAR BUDGET.

City Manager Rebecca Waldman showed a PowerPoint presentation on the proposed FY 2008-2009 operating budget and property tax rate. Ms. Waldman gave a summary of the proposed budget, revenues, appropriations and projected total revenues for the General Fund. Ms. Waldman also reviewed revenue estimates and gave a summary of

the proposed appropriations and budget for the Utility Fund. Ms. Waldman reviewed the contributions, appropriations and projected balance of the Capital Replacement Fund and Special Revenue Funds.

Ms. Waldman stated that no tax rate increase is proposed for FY 2008-2009 and the proposed total rate is \$0.355662 per \$100 valuation. Ms. Waldman gave a summary of taxes and noted that the proposed property tax revenues will account for 55% of the budgeted General Fund Revenues. Ms. Waldman stated that although the proposed tax rate will not increase, it will raise more total property tax revenue than in the previous year. Ms. Waldman explained that House Bill 3195 requires a separate vote be made to ratify the property tax revenue increases in the budget. Ms. Waldman noted that this is the first budget which will be affected by the tax freeze on residence homesteads of the disabled and of the elderly and their spouses. Ms. Waldman recommended approval of the proposed ordinances.

Councilwoman Susan Harwell and Jill Souter asked how the recent position changes will be paid for in the budget. Ms. Waldman explained that those positions are not being added, only being changed, and funding will be provided out of the department's budget.

After discussion, a motion was made by Councilwoman Jill Souter to approve the Ordinance adopting the FY 2008-2009 Operating Budget. Motion was seconded by Councilman Bill Kiel and passed by unanimous vote.

A motion was also made by Councilwoman Jill Souter to approve the Ordinance regarding the 2008 Ad Valorem Tax Rate. Motion was seconded by Councilman Bobby Rosenthal and passed by unanimous vote.

A motion was then made by Councilwoman Jill Souter to approve the Ordinance ratifying the property tax increase reflected in the FY 2008-2009 Budget. Motion was seconded by Councilwoman Susan Harwell and passed by unanimous vote.

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Item #10 Mayor Cooper read the captions to the following three ordinances.

AN ORDINANCE ACCEPTING THE PROPOSAL OF HUMANA FOR EMPLOYEE HEALTH INSURANCE AND AUTHORIZING THE CITY MANAGER TO EXECUTE A CONTRACT WITH HUMANA FOR SUCH INSURANCE

AN ORDINANCE AUTHORIZING THE CITY MANAGER TO EXTEND THE CURRENT EMPLOYEE DENTAL AND VISION INSURANCE CONTRACTS

AN ORDINANCE ACCEPTING THE PROPOSAL OF STANDARD INSURANCE COMPANY FOR EMPLOYEE LIFE INSURANCE AND AUTHORIZING THE CITY MANAGER TO EXECUTE A CONTRACT WITH STANDARD INSURANCE COMPANY FOR SUCH INSURANCE

Human Resource Manager Judith Surratt showed a PowerPoint presentation providing background on how the city obtained bids for insurance contracts. Ms. Surratt explained that it was in the best interest of employees and the City to cancel the existing health insurance contract with Aetna and award the contract to Humana. Ms. Surratt also explained that the City is not required to go out for bids for dental and vision insurance as the contract amounts for each is below the \$50,000 maximum. Dental Select and Avesis offered to renew their contracts with no increase in premiums and no changes in benefits. Four insurance providers submitted bids for the employee life insurance. Although the Standard Insurance Company employee life insurance is comparable to the existing employee life insurance plan with Aetna, the Aetna plan will not be available if the City switches to Humana for employee health insurance.

Ms. Surratt showed a chart comparing employee insurance rates and differences between the current health insurance and Humana. The chart showed a savings for the employees depending on the plan chosen and a savings as well for the city since premiums will be less than anticipated. Ms. Surratt stated that staff recommends approval of the proposed ordinances which will authorize the City Manager, in consultation with the Budget and Accountability Committee, to execute extensions of the contracts in the future so long as the extensions are available under the contracts and in the best interest of the City.

Ms. Surratt called upon Mr. Bob Feike, the City's Insurance of Record, to answer any questions posed by City Council and introduced Jenna Gasper, Account Executive with Humana. Mr. Feike thanked Ms. Waldman, Ms. Surratt, Mayor Pro-Tem Souter and Council member Kiel for working with him to obtain affordable insurance for the city and its' employees. Mr. Feike explained that the reason Humana was recommended for the health insurance contract was due to the comparable healthcare services and premium costs. Mayor Cooper, Council members and Ms. Surratt thanked Mr. Feike for his hard work and accomplishment in obtaining the best insurance rates possible.

After discussion, a motion was made by Councilman Bill Kiel to approve the Ordinance authorizing the execution of a contract with Humana for employee health insurance. Motion was seconded by Councilwoman Jill Souter and passed by unanimous vote.

A motion was also made by Councilman Bill Kiel to approve the Ordinance authorizing the extension of the current contracts with Dental Select for employee dental insurance and Avesis for employee vision insurance. Motion was seconded by Councilman Stan McCormick and passed by unanimous vote.

A motion was then made by Councilman Bill Kiel to approve the Ordinance authorizing the execution of a contract with Standard Insurance Company for employee life insurance. Motion was seconded by Councilman Bobby Rosenthal and passed by unanimous vote.

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Item #11 Mayor Cooper read the caption to the following resolution.

A RESOLUTION REQUESTING THE TEXAS MUNICIPAL LEAGUE TO SUPPORT LEGISLATION AMENDING SECTION 545.356(b-1) OF THE TEXAS TRANSPORTATION CODE TO AUTHORIZE SMALL CITIES OF LESS THAN TEN THOUSAND POPULATION TO DECLARE A SPEED LIMIT OF NOT LESS THAN TWENTY MILES PER HOUR IF THE GOVERNING BODY DETERMINES THAT A HIGHER SPEED LIMIT IS UNREASONABLE OR UNSAFE

Police Chief Pruitt showed a PowerPoint presentation giving background information on the request being made by the City Council Infrastructure and Services Committee to seek the support of the Texas Municipal League (TML) for an amendment to Section 545.356(b-1) of the Texas Transportation Code. Currently, the small cities may declare a lower speed limit of not less than twenty-five (25) miles per hour on a residential street that meets certain criteria. The requested amendment would allow cities under ten thousand (10,000) population to lower speed limits to not less than twenty (20) miles per hour on urban roadways less than 35 feet in width without regard to existing parking prohibitions. Chief Pruitt stated staff recommends approval of the proposed resolution and noted that if the proposed resolution receives favorable review, TML may recommend an amendment to the Texas Legislature in January of 2009.

After brief discussion, a motion was made by Councilman Stan McCormick to approve the Resolution as presented. Motion was seconded by Councilwoman Susan Harwell and passed by unanimous vote.

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There being no further business, a motion was made by Councilman Stan McCormick to adjourn the meeting. Motion was seconded by Councilman Bobby Rosenthal and passed by unanimous vote. Mayor Cooper adjourned the meeting at 7:43 p.m.



Louis Cooper
Mayor



Judith E. Surratt
Deputy City Secretary